CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF "CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE," "CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE," &c.

NUMBER 483. SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1841. PRICE THREE HALFPENCE.

WONDER.

A WRITER, who for some time past has been rising into celebrity, complains, in a work newly published by him, that there is so little wonder in the world. We are more disposed to complain that there is too much, and should be glad to see some of it superseded by the repose of actual knowledge. It is a feeling, however, which we do not entirely condemn: it has its legitimate and useful sphere of exercise, as well as its bewilderments and delusions. Only it were well if the distinction were generally seen and observed, and were wonder not to be indulged in for its own sake, or to the confusion of truth and the obstruction of her course. We propose to make an humble attempt in this place to define the feeling, and assign it its proper place in nature, in order that those whom we address may know exactly how to deal with it, and how to esteem its emotions.

We take wonder, then, after the fashion of the physiological school, to be one of the primitive faculties or powers of the mind, and as consequently having, like all the rest, a relative object in the external world on which to work or exercise itself. *Whatever is beyond the range of the familiar* is, we apprehend, the relative object of this faculty. It is designed to regard this object, and to take a pleasure in regarding it, thus serving to us as one of those absolutely gratuitous enjoyments which creative Providence has established in our natures, and of which the feelings for the beautiful, the ludicrous, the past and future, are other examples.

The Unfamiliar or Strange exists in various ways. A natural object may be strange from its mere appearance, as, for example, the sun would be to the first of mankind, or as a foreign animal is to any one at the present day. When familiar with the appearance of the object, we may still be totally ignorant how it came into existence; and hence the origin or cause of the object is the subject of our faculty for wonder. A thing may also be so very obscurely revealed to our perceptive faculties, that it does not readily become familiar to us—for example, the atmospheric action which so much favours the dissemination of pestilences: in as far as such a thing is unfamiliar, it will be a subject for wonder. Great and uncommon events, whether in the natural or moral world, as earthquakes, the appearance of comets, thunder-storms, revolutions, catastrophes, and so forth, are also proper subjects for the exercise of this faculty. All kinds of extraordinary persons become themes of wonder, and generally, under the influence of this faculty, the multitude conceives them to be still more extraordinary than they really are. This is the case even in the most enlightened ages; but if an extraordinary man has lived before the period of history, and has been remembered only by tradition, his qualities become in time exaggerated far beyond nature, and we have then a Hercules removing mountains, and a Fingal using a full-grown pine for a walking-cane. Whenever we are at a loss to trace effect to cause, or to assign any new thing to its proper class, we unavoidably exercise our wonder.* So, also, when any course of procedure in the affairs of men appears at all extraordinary, or any want of right relation is observed in them—in short, when a moral anomaly is presented to us—we experience the same sensation, and it is one which will be pleasing, if it offend no other of our sentiments at the time it is gratifying this. Even to suppose a number of strange characters and strange events, or to follow any other person who has the power of supposing them, gives delightful exercise to wonder: hence, eastern story-telling, the listening to minstrels and troubadours in the middle ages, and modern novel-reading and the drama amongst ourselves. A thing or an event may be in itself trivial, and easily comprehended by the intellect; but, if it be new, it will call up wonder. Though it may only be new and strange for a very short time, it will exercise wonder for that time: thus, the daily news, little as it may have of strange about it, gives pleasure at least while the newspaper continues in our hands; and thus, disappointed as we have been with the news of yesterday, still we are as eager as ever for the news of to-day. There is even a clandestine pleasure to be derived from calamitous events, if we are not ourselves immediate sufferers; and this is from no defect of sympathy for our fellow-creatures, but from the mere gratification which such occurrences give to our wonder.

The clown and the savage are of course great wonderers. With only a slight power of observation, little of reflection, and no acquired knowledge, they are disqualified to trace causes; the simplest matter out of the common course is a mystery to them. In such a limited intellectual condition, their faculty for wonder is liable to constant exercise, and can easily be imposed upon by any one in the least more knowing than themselves. History is therefore full of the deceptions practised upon the simple by the designing. Oracles, augury, false religions of all kinds, alchemy, astrology, palmistry, divination, are only the more conspicuous forms of imposture by which the unenlightened understanding has heretofore been led captive. Wonder has indeed been the lever by which the sagacious few have stirred and worked upon the vast inert mass of the ignorant many in all ages. It is from the activity of this faculty that supernatural agencies and appearances of all kinds have ever been held by the vulgar as amongst the things by which worldly affairs are affected. It was wonder which brought witches to the stake, and it is wonder which still makes the peasant afraid to walk in dreary places by night. The fisherman, under the influence of wonder, sees ill fortune forboden in a pair of broad thumbs; and the Highland maiden, from the activity of the same faculty, declines to be married on a Tuesday. Often there is something beautiful and affecting in these popular superstitions: what more touching, for instance, than the idea of the Irish mother, that when her infant smiles in sleep, an angel is whispering to it? Washington Irving well says—"It is curious to observe how the most beautiful fictions have their origin among the rude and ignorant. There is an indescribable charm about the illusions with which chimerical ignorance once clothed every subject. These *twilight views of nature* are often more captivating than any which are revealed by the rays of enlightened philosophy. The most accomplished and poetical minds have therefore been fain to search back into these accidental conceptions of what are termed barbarous ages, and to draw from thence their finest imagery and machinery. If we look through our most admired poets, we shall find that their minds have been impregnated by these popular fancies; and that those have succeeded best who have adhered most closely to the simplicity of their rustic originals. Such is the case with Shakspeare, in his Midsummer Night's Dream, which so minutely describes the employments and amusements of fairies, and embodies all the notions concerning them, which were current among the vulgar."* There is no denying the truth of these remarks; but it is at the same time very certain that to be so much under the guidance of erroneous notions, and liable to be affected in all the affairs of life by a regard to matters absolutely indifferent, is greatly disadvantageous, and must not only have a generally depressing effect upon the condition of the parties so affected, but often lead to serious calamities.

While the clown and the savage are the most noted slaves of wonder, departments of society of a much superior grade are by no means exempt from its influence. The middle and upper classes in civilised England have their dependence on imaginary causes as well as the peasantry. Let the extensive sale of quack medicines speak for the whole case. And it must be so while the minds of these individuals stop short of a considerable amount of knowledge, and a perfect faith in the natural order of all things.

Many literary men of good reputation are not less under the influence of wonder. It communicates to their writings a straining after something supernaturally fine and impressive, which perhaps captivates the reader, but only to bewilder. The writer whom we alluded to at the beginning of this paper, is a notable example of an eloquent wonderer. We find him, for instance, expressing his deliberate belief that Mahomet was not an impostor, because for twelve hundred years millions upon millions have had faith in him. "Are we to suppose," he says, "that it was a miserable piece of spiritual legerdemain, this which so many creatures of the Almighty have lived by and died by? I, for my part, cannot form such a supposition." What a burst of wonder have we here! History all the time showing the natural and easy steps by which Mahometanism advanced, and the machinery by which it has been supported; and philosophy showing as plainly as possible, how what is calculated to affect one man's wonder may affect another's, and go on spreading if there be no obstruction of superior force. M. Cousin has broached the same idea in a more general way in his new system of intellectual philosophy, which mainly rests on the notion that there is some truth in all systems which have been extensively received by mankind—a notion not only unsupported by fact, but going against it. With the same class of delusions we may reckon the idea of a distinguished French historical writer, that the atrocities of the revolution were *fated to be*, and therefore were a blame to none. Such notions only arise when the mind fails to grasp a whole subject, or to connect its parts in natural order. Reason faints, and in its trance, wonder dreams. To be thus unable to see natural and ordinary causes in great moral events, while we see them in small ones, is no better than it would be to acknowledge the principle of gravitation in the fall of an apple, but to deny it in the arrangement of the solar system. Writers of this class are, however, apt to be popular. In their perpetual "who can tell?" and the wild visionary notions they propound, the wonder of many readers finds a delightful exercise. The want of a basis in the truth of nature is no disqualification. The improbable, and even the impossible, is received readily, and this simply because it is more agreeable to that class of minds to exercise wonder than to exercise reason. They find, in the excessive acceptability of the ideas, a kind of approval of their correctness, when, in sober truth, this is only owing to the circumstance of wonder being the most active faculty in their individual minds.

It is to a cultivated class of minds that Dr Aiken alludes in the following passage of his Letters to his Son. "There is in some persons such a general want

* This is well explained by Adam Smith, in his essay entitled the "History of Astronomy."

* Bracebridge Hall.

of accuracy in examination, and of clearness in conception, as renders them almost utterly unfit to be the reporters of a matter of any nicety or complexity. They are struck with some single circumstance at the commencement, which dazzles and throws them off their guard, and confounds their perception of all the concomitants. It is upon this foible, which all men have in some degree when their curiosity is excited, that the exhibitors of juggling tricks and deceptions greatly depend for their success, in seeming to do what is impossible to human skill. I have known persons, not deficient in sense, but wanting in presence of mind, who have come from such exhibitions with the full persuasion that things have been effected which would have been absolutely supernatural; when, upon putting them to a distinct recital, it was evident that they had made no use of their senses from the beginning to the end of the process, except as they were directed.

'For they in gaping wonderment abound,'

will apply to many children six feet high, as well as to the urchins of a dame school. There is such a thing as an appetite for wonders, which makes a person meet an imposture at least half-way, and yield up his understanding almost without a struggle. * * I believe I need not inculcate upon you, that, where superstition has established its empire, all credibility is at an end respecting objects connected with that weakness."

After thus explaining what we consider as the abuses of this sentiment, it becomes our duty to show its legitimate uses. "One final cause of wonder," says Lord Kames, "is that this emotion is intended to stimulate our curiosity. Another, somewhat different, is to prepare the mind for receiving deep impressions of new objects. An acquaintance with the various things that may affect us, and with their properties, is essential to our well-being: nor will a slight and superficial acquaintance be sufficient; they ought to be so deeply engraved on the mind, as to be ready for use on every occasion. Now, in order to make a deep impression, it is wisely contrived that things should be introduced to our acquaintance with a certain pomp and solemnity productive of a vivid emotion."* This seems to us nearly correct. Wonder sets the mind a-working about unknown things, and prompts it to acquire knowledge of such things, for the sake of the gratification which is to attend the first ascertainment of them. Further, the mind, prepared by wonder, takes on its knowledge with a deep stamp, as Kames has explained. Thus wonder truly is, as Dr Brown has said, "the first step in philosophy." The tendency of wonder, then, in a right application of it, is to cause a mind to go on from one step to another, fusing the unknown into the known, and ever still on the outlook for new truths. This is a very different thing, evidently, from resting satisfied with the exercise of wonder, delighting in not knowing too clearly, denying and rejecting truth because it dispels the charming obscurity, and believing all the more greedily and the more tenaciously that which is unlikely or even impossible. There lie the abuses of the sentiment, the modes in which an ignorant and narrow mind naturally employs it. We are not to suppose, because every advance of knowledge takes away something from the domains of wonder, that these domains are necessarily reduced in amount, and must ultimately be entirely overrun. The outward bounds of that territory fly, like the Rhætian mountains, before us as we advance. All knowledge is only a step in the great endless paths of the unknown. We ascertain, for instance, that gravitation spherifies the planets; but still the question remains, whence and how gravitation? In the consideration of this question, wonder has still a delighted exercise. The clown wonders at a comet, and thinks it a dire omen: the sage becomes satisfied from investigation as to some particulars in its physical character, and sees nothing alarming in it. But the wonder of the latter may be as much excited, after all his investigations, by reflection on the admirable regularity of its periodic returns, and the amazing skill which has so planned that it crosses the planetary maze innocuous, as that of the clown is by considerations of its portentous appearance. The only difference is, that there is in the one case an enlightened, and in the other an unenlightened wonder: in the one case, all is bewilderment, with possibly the addition of terror; in the other, there is clearness of conception, and the repose of an instructed faith in that which is the Last and Greatest Object of wonder.

* Elements of Criticism, i. 99

AN OLD STORY OF FLANDERS.

The small towns of Couvin and Chimay, situated on the borders of Belgium and France, were under the dominion, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, of two baronial families, who habitually viewed each other with feelings of jealousy and dislike. The people of Chimay shared in the sentiments of their count in this respect, as did those of Couvin in the prejudices of their marquis; and hence originated many a scene of bloody dissension and strife, continued with little intermission for a long period of years.

At a time when the towns of Couvin and Chimay were both under the dominion of youthful and high-spirited lords, a new incident occurred to widen the hereditary breach between the two families, and increase an animosity which was already excessive. The Marquis de Couvin and the Count de Chimay chanced to be both present at an assembly, where the nobility of the province had met for festive purposes. The daughter of a neighbouring baron was presented on the occasion for the first time to society. She was a creature of surpassing beauty, both as regarded form and face, and an air of languor, almost of melancholy, was apparent in her large dark eyes, which made her charms more touching and resistless. So felt, at least, the young barons of Couvin and Chimay. Love for the first time dawned on the souls of both—love, ardent and strong, as the morning sun of midsummer; but with it came also its too frequent attendant, jealousy, like the cloud which often dims the brightness of the orb of nature, even amidst its July splendours. The count and marquis had their eyes respectively sharpened by the strength of their feelings, and each was conscious of the other's state of mind and heart. Though, as may be imagined, their feudal enmity was by no means diminished by these circumstances, no visible results ensued, until the fate of their passion was determined by its common object. The barons again met the lady at a provincial festival, and the fair one had to fix upon one of the two as her partner for the evening. Indeed, the choice was for life; and so it was felt to be by all parties. The Lord of Chimay was the fortunate man.

Not long afterwards, the Count and Countess of Chimay were spending the first weeks of their wedded life at the castle of the bridegroom. These weeks were in all respects happy, though the count was obliged to keep a guard on his movements; for the marquis and his vassals evinced and avowed a burning thirst for revenge. In enjoying the pleasures of the chase, the count was compelled to confine himself to the precincts of his castle, and to have a guard of huntsmen constantly about him. However, as a month or two rolled away, he grew less cautious; and one day, when his dogs had started a large wild-boar, he allowed himself to become so hot in the pursuit, that he lost sight of all his huntsmen. It was not long ere the latter took the alarm, and searched for him every where, but in vain. They then repaired to the customary place of gathering, and waited for their master there. Hour after hour flew past, however, and the count reappeared not. Again they sent out scouts in every direction, but with the same want of success. Finally, after a great part of the night had been spent in these fruitless searches, the huntsmen returned to the castle, clinging to the slight hope that the count might have reached home by a circuitous route. He had not been heard of, and they were then under the necessity of communicating the tidings of their master's loss to the countess. Already much alarmed by his delayed return, the lady was thrown into a state of inexpressible anguish. For a time she was incapable of any exertion, but at length, arousing herself, she insisted upon recommencing in person the search for her husband. The most faithful and experienced vassals of the count accompanied her. They searched every hill and plain, every glade and thicket; inquired of all persons in the neighbourhood; but every effort was unavailing. The count could not be heard of.

Eight days passed away, and found the countess still in a state of widowed suffering and sorrow. At last, as an extreme step, she resolved to address her formidable neighbour of Couvin. To him all thoughts turned, as the party most likely to know the truth, if the count's disappearance had been the result of violence; but there was not a vestige of proof against the marquis. The poor countess knew what her influence over him had once been, and she hoped not to invoke his aid, at least, in vain. She believed him to be honourable.

Dressed in deep mourning, and all in tears, she presented herself, with a numerous suite attired in the same way, before the Marquis of Couvin, and called upon him to say, "on his word as a knight," if he knew aught of the lost Count of Chimay. The marquis swore to her, upon his honour, that he knew nought of her husband's fate. "Oh, my lord!" said the countess, "shew then to the world, in these melancholy circumstances, the magnanimity of your heart. Grant me your generous assistance in discovering the fate of my husband, who, though once your rival, will become, if found, your friend for ever! Order search to be made over your domains; be the protector of the unfortunate! Honour commands it, and a lady entreats it!"

The Lord of Couvin, with great apparent sympathy and compassion, promised to do every thing in his power to aid the countess, and pressed her to stay at Couvin till a new search had been made. But perceiving the anxious looks of her old vassals, and herself feeling little confidence in the professions of the marquis, the countess returned directly to her own castle. There she awaited the result of the new inquiry. It was the same as the last; the Lord of Chimay remained undiscovered.

Several years elapsed without changing the position of affairs. The mateless countess lived in her castle, lonely and sorrowful, wearing ever her mournings, and praying that the truth might yet be revealed. She could not believe her lord to be dead. It may be conceived, therefore, what her answer was, when she ultimately received a proposal of marriage from the Marquis de Couvin, upon the plea of uniting the long-divided vassals of Couvin and Chimay. Her reply was brief. "I have no hand to dispose of. Had I thought myself free, I should long ago have ceased to live."

In the seventh year after the disappearance of the Lord of Chimay, it chanced that a young shepherd lad, a vassal of the demesne, saw a rabbit in the grounds bordering the estate of Couvin. He had his bow and arrows, and shot at it, but missed. Still he pursued it, and, getting heated in the chase, lost all thought of time or distance. His last arrow was fired at the animal as it sprung up a steep rock, and again the rabbit escaped, for the lad saw his arrow sticking in a crevice of the cliff. Young Basler, as he was named, now looked about him, and saw, to his dismay, that he had approached to the very rock on which stood the hostile castle of Couvin. However, he thought he might as well try to recover his arrow, as his chance of a supper depended much upon it. He accordingly clambered up the rock, and got at the arrow; but when he attempted to pull it out, he felt a strong resistance. Plunging in his arm to loosen the point, to his horror he felt a damp hand grasp his own, and place between his fingers the head of his arrow, along with a soft substance! The lad, terror-struck, pulled out his hand with its contents, and found that he had got a piece of linen, marked with bloody characters. For a moment he sat motionless, but at length starting up, he fled home, as fast as his feet could carry him, to tell his adventure to his parents, and shew them the rag. Fortunately, the boy's father was so far a scholar as to make out the words, "To the Countess of Chimay." The recollection of his lord burst on old Basler's mind at once, and he set off with all speed to the castle. The countess was ever accessible to her vassals, and virtue was in this case its own reward. She got the piece of linen, and no sooner saw it than she screamed aloud. But she composed herself, and read these words—"If thou art still true and faithful to me, arm thy vassals, and release me from the dungeons of Couvin."

"It is my husband's writing and signature!" cried the delighted, yet agitated and anxious countess. Without a moment's delay, she summoned all her vassals around her, and would have led them on the instant to the rescue of her lord; but the wiser of them advised her to make success secure by calling in the assistance of her neighbours, who would necessarily be indignant at the conduct of Couvin. The countess saw the propriety of acceding to this suggestion, and as many friends as could be summoned were assembled during the night. Beyond the morning, the noble lady would not delay her adventure. Fortunately, a force was by that time gathered, sufficient for the accomplishment of the enterprise.

The castle of Couvin was attacked by surprise, and taken. Its villanous lord was brought on his knees before the countess, but he sullenly denied all knowledge of the fate of the Lord of Chimay. Nevertheless, his servants, afraid for their lives, were less obstinate under question. One of them offered to lead the way to the cell in which the captive was kept, and thither he went, followed by the anxious countess. The poor prisoner was found in a melancholy state of weakness. His life, spared but to lengthen out his torments, would soon have come to an end, but for the timely relief afforded. Indeed, when the count found himself in the arms of his beloved wife, whom he had long lost all hope of seeing again, the excess of his joy had nearly overpowered his weak frame. But he was now in the hands of a kind nurse. Before he left his dungeon, he suddenly turned round. "I had nearly forgotten my only friend—my deliverer," said he; and he pointed out to his friends a little rabbit, the same which young Basler had shot at. The creature was taken up by Basler himself, and carried away from the dungeon.

The Count de Chimay was conveyed homewards in triumph, accompanied by his numerous attendants. He told his friends his simple story. On the day of the hunt, he had been seized by Couvin and a party lying in watch for him, and cast into the dungeon. A morsel of food was daily thrown to him, and he had never seen living thing for seven years, with the exception of the young rabbit which crept in through the crevice that yielded the cell its only light, and had become the tame companion of the captive. The scrap of writing which had been given to young Basler, had been long prepared for such a purpose, though with little hope that it would ever be put to use.

The Basler family were not among the least happy of the friends and vassals of Chimay on this occasion. In consideration of the service rendered by the youth, the father was made ranger of the woods of Chimay. One grant more was made to the family, and it was by this that the event was kept long in remembrance. The count decreed that a dish should be sent daily to the Baslers and their descendants, in time coming, from the table of the Lords of Chimay; and during many centuries this privilege was kept in use.

If the story, which is a true one, has no other merit, it may at least serve as an illustration of the manners of a period which we are too apt, by the influence of imagination, to dignify by the appellation of the "good old times."

SKETCHES OF SUPERSTITIONS.

MAGI OF THE EAST.

Considering the extent of territory over which the doctrines of the eastern Magi spread, and the length of time they endured, few superstitions are more worthy of historical commemoration. For a long period, they formed the religious creed of those oriental countries in which man seems to have received his nurture, and where he passed through the first initiatory steps to civilisation. A famous personage, named Zoroaster by the classical writers, and Zardescht or Zardusht by his fellow-countrymen of Persia, was either the founder or reformer of the religion of the Magi. Most probably he was only a reformer, and threw into something like an orderly shape the floating superstitions of his country and age. What that age was, is also a matter of doubt. That Zoroaster flourished at a very early period of the human annals, is proved by the fact, that some credible writers of the age of Alexander the Great speak of the Persian philosopher as having lived nearly a thousand years before their time, while others ascribe to him a much higher antiquity. Several Zoroasters have indeed been spoken of, but this is merely one of the artifices by which chronological theorists endeavour to reconcile the incidents of history with their own favourite and preconceived opinions.

Zoroaster, then, was a revered philosopher and prophet of Persia. Certain of his "Oracles" and "Maxims," considered by scholars to be in part fictitious and in part authentic, are still in existence, and constitute the chief source from which we derive an explanation of his philosophical and theological principles. We have also accounts of his views from several ancient authors. Good sense is in these mingled with much that is ridiculous and unintelligible. Those who give an account of his life say that he laughed in the hour he was born, a circumstance held peculiar to him among mankind; and it is said that the palpitation of his brain was so strong as to repel any hand laid upon his head, which was regarded as a presage of the immense intellectual power within. It is added, that he passed twenty years in the deserts, and that he lived upon one cheese, which never grew old; that he dwelt upon a mountain in solitude, searching after wisdom; that when he descended from the mount, there fell a celestial fire upon it, which burned perpetually; and that he was able to pass through the fire uninjured, as was seen by the king of Persia and his lords, when they approached the hill to put up prayers to God. All such stories connected with Zoroaster's life, the followers of the Magian doctrines believed to be true, as firmly as the Mahometans believe in the mysteries of the seven heavens, and the visits of the angel Gabriel.

Zoroaster admitted no visible object of adoration, except fire, which he considered as the most proper emblem of a supreme being. Though a more idolatrous species of fire-worshipping, and other corruptions, ultimately became part of the Magian creed, Zoroaster seems to have inculcated nothing like diabolical magic. His creed had its foundation in the study of the Divine nature; but apparently his conclusions upon this subject were such as to have a most prejudicial influence on the religious opinions of ancient Asia. Finding good and evil in the world, he seems to have arrived at a conclusion not unnatural to minds unenlightened by revelation or true philosophy; namely, that there are two co-eternal essences in the universe, the one good and the other bad, which antagonise each other. The founders of the Hindoo creed had arrived at the same conclusion; and, indeed, partly by Zoroaster's influence, a great part of the East appears to have been overspread by similar ideas. Zoroaster denominates the first principle of all "Time without bounds," a principle which, as Gibbon remarks, is extremely like the monstrous chaos of the Greeks. From this first essence were evolved two others, Ormusd and Ahriman, both of them creative powers, but the former a being of light, the other of darkness. Ormusd benevolently made man capable of all good, and placed all good around him; but the dark-spirited Ahriman *pierced the perfect egg* of Ormusd, and infused evil into it. Hence all the ills of humanity, all the convulsions of nature; but, by the same creed, the good spirit is finally to triumph, and overcome its evil antagonist. In this hope, the followers of Zoroaster looked complacently on the future.

It has been mentioned that the Magian creed partook liberally of folly and wisdom. The faithful Persian was invested, on reaching manhood, with a mystic girdle, the badge of divine protection; and ejaculations and genuflexions were pointed out as not less important than moral duties. "But there are some remarkable instances," says Gibbon, "in which Zoroaster lays aside the prophet, assumes the legislator, and discovers a liberal concern for the private and public happiness, seldom to be found among the grovelling or visionary schemes of superstition." He orders his followers "to plant useful trees, to destroy noxious animals, to convey water to the dry lands of Persia," and to pursue all agricultural labours. "In the spring of every year, a festival was celebrated, destined to represent the primitive equality and the present connexion of mankind: the stately kings of Persia, exchanging their vain pomp for more genuine greatness, freely mingled with the humblest but most useful of their subjects. On that day, the husbandmen were admitted, without distinction, to the table of the king and his satraps. The monarch accepted their petitions, inquired into their grievances, and conversed with them on the most equal terms. 'From your labours,' was he accustomed to say, and to say with truth, if not with sincerity, 'from your labours we receive our subsistence; you derive your tranquillity from our vigilance: since, therefore, we are mutually necessary to each other, let us live together like brothers, in concord and love.' Such a festival must indeed have degenerated, in a wealthy and despotic empire, into a theatrical representation; but it was at least a comedy well worthy of a royal audience, and which might sometimes imprint a salutary lesson on the mind of a young prince. Had Zoroaster, in all his institutions, invariably supported this exalted character, his name would deserve a place with those of Numa and Confucius, and his system would be justly entitled to all the applause which it has pleased some of our divines, and even some of our philosophers, to bestow on it."

To give our readers some idea of the mixed character of the extant writings of Zoroaster—of the combination of good sense with mystical folly which they exhibit—we quote a few of them, without distinguishing, however, those called fictitious from those termed genuine, because we fear this distinction to be almost entirely the work of recent criticism, and to be founded upon their several degrees of rationality. We must take the good with the bad, in the state in which they all came, most probably, from the imperfectly cultivated mind of the old Magian.

The following extracts are from the "Oracles," and the subject is the Deity.

"But God is he that has the head of a hawk. He is the first, indestructible, eternal, unbegotten, indivisible, dissimilar; the dispenser of all good; incorruptible; the best of the good, the wisest of the wise. He is the father of equity and justice, self-taught, physical, perfect, and wise, and the only inventor of the sacred philosophy.

The mundane god, eternal, boundless, young and old, of a spiral form.

For eternity, according to the oracle, is the cause of never-failing life, of unwearied power, and unsluggish energy.

The Father has hastily withdrawn himself, but has not shut up his own fire in his intellectual power.

All things are the progeny of one fire. The Father perfected all things, and delivered them over to the second mind, whom all nations of men call the first.

The mind of the Father riding on attenuated rulers which glitter with the furrows of inflexible and implacable fire.

After the paternal conception I the soul reside, a heat animating all things. For he placed mind in soul, and soul in dull body; the Father of the gods and men so placed them in ours.

Natural works co-exist with the intellectual light of the Father; for it is the soul which adorned the great heaven, and which adorns it after the Father; but her horns are established on high."

The "Maxims" of Zoroaster present us with a greater infusion of sound sense and just thought than the "Oracles," and we select a few as a specimen.

"The most ancient of all things is God, for he is uncreated; the most beautiful is the world, because it is the work of God; the greatest is space, for it contains all that has been created; the quickest is the mind; the strongest is necessity; the wisest is time, for it teaches to become so; the most constant is hope, which alone remains to man when he has lost every thing; the best is virtue, without which there is nothing good.

It is the decree of the most just God, that men shall be judged according to the good or evil which they shall have done. Their actions will be weighed in the balance of equity. The good will dwell in light.

Honour thy father and thy mother, if thou wishest to live eternal life.

Such as thou art unto thy father, such shall thy children be unto thee.

Honour the aged, and let the youngest always yield unto the oldest.

Marry in thy youth. This world is but a passage: it is necessary that thy son should succeed to thee, and that the chain of being should be preserved unbroken.

When thou eatest, give also to the dogs to eat.

It is forbidden to quit a post without the permission of the commander. Life is the post of man.

Temperance is the strength of the mind. Man is dead in the intoxication of wine."

Not wishing to annoy our readers with any thing else than a specimen of the follies mixed with the Magian creed, we have perhaps been led to present too favourable a view of this superstition of the old times. But in no point of view, in truth, can the superstition of the Magi be held to exhibit any thing like the dark and bloody spirit of the Scandinavian mythology. The gentleness of their clime seems to have tempered the creed of the Chaldees and Persians, and we can but trace in their notions the crudeness inseparable from the state of knowledge in those early times. Long after the days of Zoroaster, as has been said, the creed of the fire-worshippers grew more savage and disgusting, and human sacrifices became not uncommon. We may have some idea of the long duration of the Magian doctrines from the fact, that the Greek and Roman conquests never rooted them out fully from the East, but that they only gave way to the spread of the religion of Mahomet. Till this day, however, the religion of Zoroaster or Fire Worship exists in Caramania, towards the Persian Gulf, where it is followed by a remnant of the ancient Persian nation, called by the Mahometans Guebres or Giaours (infidels), though in all likelihood the forms of worship and doctrines of the old superstition are modified by the lapse of time and circumstances.

CAPE COTTAGE.

We extract the following fascinating description of a residence beside one of the bays of New England, from Mr Combe's "Notes on America." It is not, however, the composition of that gentleman, but of his lady, who, we may remark, is the youngest daughter of the late Mrs Siddons. The description forms part of a familiar letter written by Mrs Combe to a friend in England, and, in liveliness, delicacy, and grace, it appears to us to be surpassed by the productions of no living female writer:—

"Here you may picture us quietly seated in our summer retreat, a handsome, rather large cottage, built of wood, clap-boarded, and painted white, with those green outside window-shutters which give such an air of coolness and neatness to New England cottages in general. Cape Cottage stands upon Cape Elizabeth, a projecting point, jutting out into Casco Bay, and forming one of its extremities. It lies three miles and a half from Portland, whether by a good road or by the sea. Casco Bay is full of islands beautifully grouped; common report states them to amount to three hundred, but the fisherman whose boat we hire to carry us among them, limits their number to forty-three. Portland Harbour, which is formed by an indentation in the land, is protected from the Atlantic on all sides by these islands, through which, however, several channels allow ships to approach it from various points. Nothing can exceed the picturesque beauty of the vessels, when appearing and disappearing through these openings. The harbour is defended by two forts, named after natives of Portland—Fort Preble, on the main land, and opposite to it, on an island, Fort Scammel. The Americans have improved the name of the cape, by changing the Indian 'Pooduc' into 'Cape Elizabeth;' but they have been less successful with the islands, to three of which they have given the unpoetical appellations of 'Hog,' 'House,' and 'Bang.' The main channel to the harbour lies in front of our windows, at the distance of a hundred yards. It is about one mile broad, and is bounded on the opposite side by Hog Island. We enjoy a view of the vessels bound to and from Portland; and certainly no craft can look better under a soft southern breeze and a bright sun; for their sprightly elegant forms glide like nautilus shells on a ground of lapis-lazuli, with their white sails unsullied by dirt or coal-smoke.

The coast is rocky, and not unlike that of Cullercoats on our own north-eastern shores. The rocks are of mica-slate, which is not always a very picturesque formation; but here they contain iron, which, by rusting, has subjected them to disintegration, and the waves have torn them into manifold forms, and strewed them about in a thousand fantastic groups. They seem as if fashioned for the very purpose of delighting the idler; you may scramble over them for miles, and every pinnacle will afford you a varied view; or you may sit under their shade, screened from all winds, and from the sun at every hour of the day. Here you may ruminate on ocean, earth, and heaven, and, if fond of adventure, you may, by indulging in a little absence of mind, be surrounded by the tide, and become a living statue ornamenting a craggy point of rock, till the falling waters set you free. From this grandeur of devastation and disorder, you are brought by a sweep of the coast into a sweet, placid, little bay, where you would think the miniature wavelets could never swell into fury; and yet we have seen the Atlantic, when roused by a north-easterly gale, pour terrific masses of water into these seemingly peaceful retreats.

The place is essentially scenic. Every white sail that starts out from behind a jutting rock makes you think that an adventure ought to belong to it, and every man who takes up a fishing-rod, and places himself on an eminence, however common-looking before, is immediately transformed into a picturesque object, and is invested with interest. Although nature has not endowed me with those strong perceptive faculties that constitute enthusiasts in scenery, yet a fine pro-

spect appeals also to the moral part of our nature, and leads us, by a process too rapid for analysis, from physical to mental beauty, and to its Author, Infinite Goodness. I can seldom recall to my mind's eye, as some persons can, any scene, however lovely or however dear, but through my mind's affections it may be long remembered. I sit on these rocks and recall the songs of the sea that I used to hear in my dear native land, and among them comes oftenest back that sweet ode of Mrs Hemans, 'The Treasures of the Deep,' in the tones of my own fascinating cousin Mrs A——.

The land that skirts the coast is, like our English downs, grassy and gently undulating, with here a projecting rock and there a little pool. It affords pasture to cattle, sheep, and horses, and is all open to the footsteps of the wanderer. Beyond this, the country is divided into small farms, the possessors of which are also many of them fishermen, whose neat white cottages gleam forth from amidst brushwood, tall Indian corn, and rather stunted trees. As we range along the shore, one ear drinks in the murmur of the waves and the splashing of oars, whilst the other feeds on the notes of American robins, the sharpening of scythes, and the lowing of herds.

These rural sounds, I am sorry to say, are not always pleasant. In a ramble I took a few days ago, I was distressed by the peculiarly plaintive tone in which a cow, standing alone by a barn, was lowing. 'What's the matter with her?' I asked of a man who leaned over the wall. 'Calf killed,' was his abrupt reply; and, as he spoke, he spread a fresh skin on the wall. The poor mother recognised it, ran up to it, began licking it, and smelling to the little hoofs that hung down; she then looked into the man's face and lowed most piteously; and again caressed the remains of her lost darling! 'She'll go on that way for four or five days,' said her master; and sure enough it was so, for I never passed that way, for more days than four, that I did not hear her plaintive tones.

A profusion of wild-flowers, some of which are cultivated in gardens at home, may be gathered on the downs and in the fields. Our parlour is generally adorned with bouquets of them, including fragrant dog-roses, that grow even in the clefts of the rocks, quite down to the margin of the tide. Wild raspberries, of excellent quality, wild strawberries, and the whortleberry, or Scotch 'blaeberry,' abound every where. They, and excellent sea-fishing, attract numerous parties of pleasure from Portland, who arrive, some in handsome barges by the bay, others in equipages, of all varieties of form, by the road; they spend a few hours rambling singly or in groups, give liveliness to the scene, and return home in the evening. The fields also are alive with grasshoppers, large and small, which hop into your face without ceremony, and are often brought home and hung up in one's closet in some fold of dress, from which they skip forth next morning, much to their own gratification and to our surprise. Besides the shrill chirping, which is the only sound uttered by our English grasshoppers, some of these emit a noise like that of castanets in action, or the tapping with an iron-shod walking-stick on a hard stone. Nobody can tell me whether this sound proceeds from the Cicada; but, from watching them, I perceive that the individuals which make it are larger than their chirping brothers. As you walk along, you encounter also whole clouds of primrose-coloured butterflies, and pale blue dragon-flies. These are harmless; I wish we could say as much of those bloodthirsty musquitoes, which infest us every where, and seem as if sent to remind us, amidst all these sweets, that we are still in a world of mingled good and evil. My poor husband has lain on the sofa for three weeks, lame with their bites on his ankles, and is only now again able to walk. My own eyes have often been closed up for days by the mountainous swellings with which they have been encircled; but, thanks to Providence, the musquitoes have generally taken them in turns, and left me one at a time fit for use. We have learned, however, to exclude them from our rooms. We have nailed catgut muslin over every window, through which they find it difficult to squeeze even their slender bodies; and this, with ablutions of camphorated spirits, nearly frees us from their in-door intrusion.

We have hired a horse and gig from Captain —— (a respectable butcher in Portland), and had delightful drives into the country. The ground, in general, within ten or twelve miles of our cottage, is pleasing and rural, without being either rich or highly cultivated; and in this dry season most of the roads are good. Every drive brings us within sight of the ocean or the bay, at one point or another; and three tall snow-white towers, crowned with lanterns, and used as lighthouses, are pretty objects in the scene. The condition of the country and people is obviously behind that of the rural population in Connecticut and Massachusetts; but the abundance of spruce-firs, generally grouped in small masses, the undulating and verdant surface, and the detached farm-houses and offices, constantly remind me of England, and, in many points of view, of the 'park' of some great earl. Here you seldom see a cottage, however small, that is not brilliant with white paint, and verdant with green shutters, and without something like a garden about it, producing a pleasing impression of cleanliness and comfort.

A few days ago some one brought up to the house a portion of common sea-weed, which, by a freak of nature, had grown into the exact similitude of a lady's mantelet or cloak, such as have been lately worn in the world of fashion. It was double, and trimmed round with what was doubtless intended for an embroidered flouncing, since it had regular holes in it like what our grandmothers called punching. It was of a very becoming form, I assure you: they are not uncommon here, both of green and brown colours, so we may suit our complexions in the article, which, perhaps, some mermaid mantua-maker has sent up, in hopes to decoy the poor thoughtless lovers of finery to her emporium below the waves!

But it is time that I should introduce you to the interior of our cottage. It would never do for an American rural retreat; for, although a 'public-house,' as they name a hotel, it is of such moderate dimensions, that the family of one of the ministers of Portland, that of a senator from Maine to Congress, and ourselves, with the landlord and his family, fill it. This is exactly to our taste, but would be very humdrum to those who rejoice in the crowds of Saratoga or the white sulphur springs. At breakfast, dinner, and tea, we form a very agreeable family party, and, as we have our separate parlours, we have retirement at command when desired. Add to this society visits from various friends in Portland, and from one of the best of Boston's accomplished sons—one engaged in kindred pursuits with my husband, who has come hither and spent several days with us—and you have a picture of our social parties.

We boast of no finery in our cottage, but it will vie with a palace for order and cleanliness; our fare is not such as would suit a London alderman, but it is abundant, savoury, and well cooked. Air, exercise, and minds agreeably occupied, yet void of care, give an exquisite relish to our dinners of fresh fish (cunners and polloks caught by the rod on the rocks, by the master of the inn, his son, or their boys), our 'chowder,' or fish-soup, our young Indian corn, and our squash—the last a very delicate vegetable, I assure you, notwithstanding its frightfully vulgar name. Fowls, turkeys, beef, veal, and mutton, make up our fare; and we are in no danger of suffering want either of substance or variety in our meals.

You hear much of the want of respect and other faults in the manners of the people here; and, perhaps, if you had seen our hostess quietly keep the seat in our room in which I found her this morning, and heard her tell me, while I was standing before her, that she was trying my air-cushion, and continue to ask various questions about it, without rising, you would have imagined that this was a confirmation of the fact. But in incidents of this kind, the *manner* is every thing. Our hostess is a naturally genteel woman, and had not the slightest idea of intruding; her curiosity to understand the nature of the air-cushion bespoke an active intelligence, of which we enjoy the advantage in her management of the general affairs of her household. Besides, in this country, such freedoms do not constitute marks of disrespect, and every land should be tried by its own laws of politeness. Those stiff-necked persons, who cannot turn to the right or the left as the road bends, had better stay at home, and enjoy their rigid postures in their own chimney-corners. At the same time, I must remark that, in this country, where equality is the birthright of all, *manners* should form a much more important branch of education than they do. There are many persons who, through thoughtlessness, or selfishness, or mere ignorance, are in the habit of committing offences against delicacy, refinement, and common sense. These certainly should be taught, with all possible celerity and assiduity, that in a state of society where all ranks may mingle together, and where the lowest may be found in juxtaposition with the highest, *all* are bound to conduct themselves so that they shall not be an annoyance to any. My husband tells them pithily, that if they be all sovereigns, as they claim to be, they are bound to be all gentlemen. I go so far with this idea, that I maintain that this not only should, but, by proper training in childhood, *might* be the case in all societies. Look at the manners of the poorest children who have been well trained in one of Wilderspin's infant schools; they are inoffensive and well-bred, and the sum of their own enjoyment is not diminished by this accomplishment—nay, it is increased; for good-breeding is the consequence of the education of the moral sentiments, which leads to refinement as well as to virtue. We often hear of an aristocracy of intellect. I wish that all over the world we saw an aristocracy of good-breeding: if such existed, political equality would not be far distant.

But I am writing a dissertation, when I meant only to give you a description. I must introduce you, then, to mine host's eldest daughter, Tabby. She is an excellent, sensible, and obliging young woman; and between her and me there have been amicable interchanges of books and other civilities. Her collection of books comprises Byron, Moore, Mrs Hemans, &c., in poetry; a full and well-written history of the North American Indian tribes; a description of Herculaneum and Pompeii; a History of all Religions, and many other works. Well, Tabby has just come in to borrow a dress for a pattern; to which I made her most welcome. I mention this incident only to assure you that it may be done, and has been done, without the least shadow of that offensive familiarity which has been attributed to such a request by some of our English historians of American manners. I am quite sure that Tabby would have had pleasure in lending me any of her patterns, and thinks that in borrowing mine she but increases the sum of general enjoyment without in the least deducting from particular advantage. It was a pleasure to me to oblige her; and I can testify besides, that there was no domestic duty which could add to my comfort, which Tabby did not as cheerfully perform as if she had never either owned a work on poetry, or borrowed the pattern of a piece of dress.

The youngest daughter of this family might sit for a picture of Laura or Beatrice. Her face is lovely, with the real golden hair parted from her smooth white brow, and the very peculiarly rich chestnut-coloured eyes, which are so rare and so beautiful. This girl, if her form were equal to her face, would be one of the fairest creatures I have seen in this land of fair ones. These girls, and the fishermen, and the boys who attend to the horses and carriages that come here, may be seen strolling together among the wild raspberries, or conversing familiarly under the large portico (with which all American inns are furnished)—a perfect specimen of equality; but if you imagine by this that the girls permit, or the men offer, rude jesting, romping, or other improprieties of behaviour, you commit the error of supposing them to be, in manners and feelings, the exact counterparts of our own people of the same station, which is not the case. Their 'sovereignty' has at least taught them self-respect, and this is a great means of ensuring respect from others.

It is a great comfort to us to be served by the landlord's daughters, and by his wife as cook; for the want of *help* is as great an evil here as in other parts of the Union. A lady of note, in speaking to me of the flourishing state of the cotton factories at Saco, fifteen miles from Portland, said, 'If you want to know the real aristocracy of this country, look at the factory girls; they will not come to us as servants; they make us work much harder in our kitchens than they do at their spinning-jennies. It would be all fair if we and they could ride and tie; but absolutely it is we who are the domestic drudges.' This you will think is a sad picture of life in a democracy, but, as you are a benevolent lady, perhaps the cause of it may lessen your regrets: these factory girls are the daughters of small proprietors who farm their own lands, or of respectable tradesmen; they engage in labour to make up a little purse for marriage, or to help an old father and mother, and they naturally prefer that kind of work which yields them the best return. The factory owners pay them two, or two and a half dollars a-week of wages; and, in domestic service, they could not obtain much above one-half of this sum.

If you are not tired of my descriptions, I will introduce you to two more of our friends and companions—fine young Newfoundland Dash, with an ingenuous earnest countenance, ever watching for our casting sticks into the bay, that he may swim and bring them back; and little stuffy Yorick, with eyes so clear that I think they must be made of Labrador pebbles, and whose bark is the most perfect expression of self-importance, seemingly uttered to warn the meaner crowd to preserve their proper distance.

How do we spend our time? In reading, writing, walking, driving, talking, scrambling, and sitting amidst those delicious rocks, in a balmy air! The hours fly like minutes, and the days like hours. One of my husband's recreations amuses me. You must know that Portland is a great port for 'the lumber trade'—*Anglicè*, the log and deal trade; and the coast of the bay is literally strewed with deal-ends and fragments of wood of all shapes and sizes. He gathers those that suit his purpose, fashions them with his knife into the form of ships, fits rudders and masts to them, uses the outer surface of birch bark for sails, and sends them forth into the bay or the Atlantic, as the wind answers. We see them scudding joyously before the gentle south-west wind out into the ocean. If any of them reach your coast, capture them and condemn them as lawful prizes. Another of our amusements is watching the great 'sea serpent.' I think that we have found out what perhaps has given rise to some of the stories you may have read about it. One night there was a brisk gale from the south-west, and the appearance of stormy weather. In the morning, the porpoises came rolling in to this harbour in great numbers, and some of them of enormous size. They followed each other in a long straight line, and as the backs of a dozen of them in different parts of this line shot up at the same moment, a small stretch of imagination could supply solid substance to the watery spaces between them, and thus picture them as one continuous creature. Our host, who is a sensible man, gravely asked if we had seen the 'sea serpent,' 'who,' said he, 'with his family, is reported to be somewhere off this coast.' I heard him put the same question to a chance fisherman, who answered as gravely, 'Oh yes, we've run alongside of him for ten miles!' The only drawback, besides the musquitoes, to our enjoyment, is periodical visitations of dense fogs. They come so regularly every Monday, that we at last reckon them as due on that day. They blot out, by their leaden vapour, all our lovely islands, bays, roses, cliffs, and even the foaming surge, as if they had never been. One day, as I stood under the portico, the mist opened for a few seconds, just sufficient to show the steamboat from Boston, like a dim ghost, dripping with the heavy fog, and labouring most disconsolately into port; having, as we afterwards heard, been obliged twice to take refuge on her

voyage. She gave us one melancholy glance and groan, and was again shrouded from our view.

This afternoon, dear ——, we must bid adieu to our pretty cottage, and all its *agrémens*. I have taken my last look of those rocks and waves, and grassy seats and sunny islands, and I am sad to part with them! It is strange to find one's affections taken captive by a place which one could see only for a few weeks, and which we must leave without the remotest prospect of ever revisiting it; but so it is—our affections answer to the calls of their objects, and leave reason to decide in its own way on the wisdom of their doing so. I have stored my memory with images of goodness, peace, and beauty, and so, my dear Casco Bay, I will not repent of knowing you, though I must leave you behind. You are lying in a glorious sunshine on our last interview, and I carry off your last smile of loveliness as that by which you shall hereafter live in my memory and affections. Adieu."

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

EMIGRATION.

We perceived by the London newspapers, a few weeks ago, that the Thames was crowded with emigrant vessels for both the Australian and American colonies, and that for New Zealand alone no fewer than five thousand berths had been taken. From other floating information that has reached us, it appears that this has been a peculiarly emigrating season; and as respects the dispatch of vessels from London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Leith, and other ports, things have been done on a scale of magnitude never formerly reached.

It is exceedingly pleasing to know that so many thousands of individuals, whose circumstances required to be materially bettered, should have possessed the means as well as the fortitude to encounter the difficulties of emigration, with the hope of improving their condition. The tide of emigration, however, from these shores is yet far from being what it ought to be; and we feel certain that if matters with all parties were properly managed, ten for one would be found on their way to scenes of industry, at present in need of their services. When we recollect that *here* there is that superabundance of hands which lowers wages to a rate compatible with bare existence, and causes a widely-spread deterioration of moral and physical circumstances; while *there*, across a certain breadth of sea, easily traversed by vessels, lands of almost incalculable extent and fertility lie ready for occupation, and offer highly remunerative employment to any given number of labourers, we cannot help feeling a degree of surprise at the general apathy displayed on the subject. It is not going too far to say, that the various Australian colonies could find the most comfortable means of subsistence for fifty thousand able-bodied families annually. At Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, the demand for all kinds of servants and workmen is excessive, and seems impossible to be stayed. In a letter from a gentleman at Melbourne (Port Philip) dated July 23, 1840, to his father in this country, and which has been obligingly shown to us, we find the following passages:—"Melbourne is spreading out daily to a great extent. Labour is the cry. We have had three ships from Mr Marshall of London, during the last three weeks, each vessel bringing at least 200 emigrants; yet the wages are 12s. per day for mechanics, 8s. per day for labourers, and shepherds L.35 per annum, with rations; female house-servants L.20, and female cooks L.25 to L.30 per annum, with board and lodging. These are the wages now, and no prospect of a fall. No sooner does an emigrant ship arrive in the bay, than numbers go down and engage servants; and before a week has passed, they are all taken up." It is true, the expense of living is higher at Melbourne than it is in this country, but we should suppose not more than a fourth can be reasonably deducted from the rate of wages on this account; and it is very certain that no man or woman of honest character who is willing to work, need lack the means of a comfortable mode of life, besides the prospect of still greater advantages.

With such incontestible facts as these before us, we repeat that it is truly surprising how little the subject of colonial emigration is agitated. Why the colonies—those grand rudiments of future nations of a free and civilised people—should not, to use a common phrase, *be made the most of*, passes our comprehension. Whether the blame is imputable to the colonies themselves, or the home country, it is not for us to say, but the fact is clear that there is error somewhere. What we should wish to see is a thorough awakening on the subject—active measures adopted by the colonial authorities to further the introduction and settlement of labourers—active measures adopted by the people at large to meet the demand for their services—and active measures by the home government to further the plans of both parties. Parishes, unions, towns, societies—all should stir themselves in this important question, and not by any temporary start, but on a sound, a continuous, and methodic principle.

NOTE TO ARTICLE "PREVENTION," IN NO. 481.

After that article had gone to press, we had the satisfaction of receiving the subjoined certificate, referring to the statement that a ventilated house in Anderston, a suburb of Glasgow, had been almost exempt from fever for the last eight years, while the disease raged throughout the city. The subscribers of the document are the proprietors of the house, and the employers of the principal parties living in it; and their testimony must therefore be considered as beyond question. Of the justice of the remark which they add to their statement, there can, we think, be no reasonable doubt:—

"*Glasgow, March* 29, 1841.

We have much pleasure in certifying, that the mode of ventilation which has now been in operation in our Barracks for about eight years, under Dr Fleming's superintendence, has been productive of the most important benefit to the general health of those residing there, particularly in regard to fever, which, during that period, may be said to have entirely disappeared from the place.

Previous to the introduction of this improvement, fever was almost continually in the Barracks, and the annual number of cases ranged about fifty, and, in the latter part of 1831, fifty-seven cases are reported to have taken place in the short space of two months. During the last eight years, only a few cases have occurred, and all these, we believe, can be traced to individuals coming into the Barracks having the fever upon them at the time. We cannot expect, however, that our houses will always be free from fever, so long as a similar mode of ventilation is not generally adopted in the neighbourhood; and it has been a matter of much surprise to us, when so simple and efficient a mode of prevention can be so easily put in practice, that hitherto so little attention has been paid to the subject by those interested in the welfare of the working-classes.

If this plan of ventilation were adopted in the ill-ventilated parts of Glasgow, where fever is never absent, we feel convinced that the same beneficial results would take place that we have experience of in our own houses.

HY. HOULDSWORTH AND SONS."

We may add, that, in other words, many large towns which are now compelled to raise some thousands of pounds annually to support fever hospitals, infirmaries, work-houses, &c., might, by adopting a simple system of ventilation among the houses of the poor, be spared by far the greater part of such an excessive expenditure.

"THE PLOUGHMAN."

THE latest published of Mr Knight's useful series of publications, forming "Guides to Service," is one entitled "THE PLOUGHMAN," and differs from those which have preceded it, in being in the form of a narrative, or simple story, describing the career of a lad bred to the plough and other rustic labour. With the twofold purpose of making the work better known, and entertaining our humble country readers, we offer a brief sketch of its contents.

Robert is the son of a farm labourer, who did his best to give him a plain education at the village-school, and afterwards to get him employed as a shepherd by Mr Lightfoot, a neighbouring farmer. The employment was easy, but required attention. Instead of money wages, Mr Lightfoot promised him "a fleece of the best wool the little flock produced at shearing-time (knowing that his mother was industrious, and knitted stockings for the family), and a shilling ahead at the end of the season; but if any of the sheep should be lost from want of care on the part of the shepherd, for every such sheep so lost five shillings should be deducted from the amount of Robert's wages. This was an admirable arrangement, very flattering to Robert, for he felt a direct interest in taking especial care of his flock, and the wages he might reasonably expect were better than either 3d. or 4d. per day; and even if he had received no more than the smaller of these sums, he was himself able to calculate that 3d. a-day was at the rate of 1s. 6d. a-week, and that 1s. 6d. a-week, at the end of the year, would amount to four pounds, lacking only two shillings; and every labouring man knows, who has a family to maintain, that four pounds would often prove of very great assistance indeed, added to their own earnings. Robert's father was generous enough to promise the boy that he should have all the money he earned; and if there was more than paid for his clothing, then the rest should be at his own disposal. The boy, however, had no ambition to consider his earnings his own; his father, he was aware, had to maintain and clothe him. At any rate, he was delighted with the idea of becoming usefully employed; and all that he cared about the rest was, that he might now and then be able to procure some interesting and useful book, and a little time occasionally to devote to reading its contents. He would have been glad to have remained at school a little longer, but as his father's family stood in need of the little he might be able to earn, he was even more glad at having an opportunity of exerting himself in their behalf.

Robert's new employment required but a trifling expense as an outfit—8d. or 9d. for a good pocket knife, and 4d. or 6d. for a small tin bottle to hold a little milk, not always to be had—for it is very scarce at times among arable farmers, and more so among their labourers—but at such times as he could get it. Had he been employed in such duties as would have enabled him to join his father at the dinner-hour, it might have been somewhat more convenient, and a trifling saving into the bargain, for in that case one bag and one bottle would have answered for them both. However, one advantage was taken of Robert's attending his flock daily on the same farm with his father; for as the latter had to leave home at a very early hour in the morning, in order to look after his team of horses and prepare them for their work—six o'clock being the usual hour of turning out with the teams during the summer, and as early as there was sufficient daylight during the remainder of the year—he was in the habit of taking his breakfast along with him to the stables, and after he had got his horses fed, cleaned, and harnessed, and the stable cleaned out, then he would sit down and eat a morsel of cold breakfast. But after Robert commenced going to his daily occupation, first breakfasting himself at home, he would then set out with his father's breakfast; and although the distance was nearly a mile, he commonly managed to reach him while it still was tolerably warm, and about the time he was ready for it. Robert, by thus going to the homestead, received orders for the day respecting where he should herd his little flock of sheep; for although that was generally understood over night, an unexpected change of weather would sometimes render it desirable to alter the previous plan, since some of the waste lands were peculiarly exposed to the effects of the rains and storms."

While in this easy situation, Robert had sufficient address to learn the art of attending upon and keeping horses to ride; and he sighed for the time when he should be permitted to handle the plough-cords, and have the guidance of that prince of husbandry implements—the plough. His remarkably steady conduct, contrasted with that of an acquaintance Richard in a similar situation, at length induced his master to commit the driving of carts to his charge.

"Robert was provided with a carter's whip—more as the emblem of his new calling than that there actually existed any necessity for his using it; for the teams being well kept, and the carts never overloaded, there was little or no necessity for the application of whipcord. A whip in some boys' hands is a dangerous and improper indulgence; for where it may not be applied to the horses themselves, most boys are very fond of cracking a whip, and of cutting at any thing that may happen to come within their reach. This is highly improper; and many a team has been so scared with this sort of foolery, as to cause them to run away with the vehicle to which they may chance to have been harnessed, to the great danger and risk of themselves; and, when it happens to be upon a public highway, to the danger of all such as may be travelling thereon. But Robert understood all this—and he also perfectly understood the very limited vocabulary of the language applied to horses; in which there is probably less variation, taking the kingdom at large, than in almost any other series of general terms with which we are acquainted. The whip, to Robert, was therefore rather an inconvenience than any advantage; and yet he could not help feeling a superior consequence and importance as he walked smartly along by the side of his horses, when he observed the flexible part of his long whip dangling above his head."

In this way Robert acquired a knowledge of carting, and the general management of horses in the stable. He was afterwards appointed to assist an experienced old man in the care of the hog-pens, during the season when the animals were fattening, and thus had "an opportunity of learning what many youths are deficient in, namely, the best modes of managing those sorts of farm-stock requiring most attention." In his eighteenth year, Robert had so ingratiated himself with his master, that he was intrusted with a pair of horses and took his place as a regular ploughman; but fortunately, just before entering on these manly duties, he had an opportunity of improving his education. An exciseman, having too little professional labour, took up an evening school. "Robert, and one or two other boys of humble parentage, but of good abilities and application, and of mild and civil deportment, became greater favourites with this conscientious and worthy man than any of the other scholars. During the four months, Robert not only greatly improved his handwriting, but made much progress in arithmetic; and had also learned how to measure a field, whether the shape was a square, an oblong, or a triangle; as well as a piece of timber or any other solid body, whether it consisted of a block of stone or a regular-shaped piece of a hay-stack. Now, these are attainments that but few persons in Robert's humble condition ever aspire to, not that opportunities do not occur, but when they do occur, very few have the ambition to become acquainted with them. Besides, an opinion generally prevails that a long period is requisite to be able to acquire the extent of knowledge we have just mentioned, than which nothing can be more erroneous; but when the lower orders see the sons of their superiors and masters returning home from school, after four or five years, incompetent to undertake the measurement of their fathers' fields, their timber, or their haystacks, it is by no means unlikely that their rustic dependants should entertain false notions respecting the length of time that an intelligent and assiduous lad will be able to acquire the necessary knowledge to enable him to undertake such tasks.

Mr Lightfoot, who could appreciate the extent of Robert's acquirements, was delighted that he had, in some measure, been the means of bringing about so desirable a result; and he determined upon turning it to good account whenever an opportunity presented itself; for he knew that without more or less practice,

Robert would be likely soon to forget the rules and the rudiments he had made himself master of under his late preceptor. Whenever, therefore, any little job of measuring was requisite, after he had measured it himself, he would request Robert to exercise his talent in that way when he happened to have a little spare time, which would serve as a sort of check upon the former measurement; while, if it happened that Robert found himself at a loss, his master was ready to assist him to surmount the difficulty."

In commencing his labours as a ploughman, Robert found the advantage of having a master both able and willing to instruct those under his care. For example, "On Mr Lightfoot observing that Robert had commenced ploughing out a few short lands, in a different manner to that which he had intended, he rode up to where he was at work, and desired him to stop his team and bait his horses, while he gave him some directions upon the different modes of ploughing, which he acknowledged he ought to have done sooner; and although he perceived he had got a little wrong at present, he doubted not but what he was going to instruct him upon, would prevent him from getting into similar errors. 'You will have observed,' said Mr Lightfoot, 'that some of the fields are ploughed up in a different manner from others, and the lands or ridges formed differently—some being very narrow, others of a considerable breadth, and a difference is also made (between the light soils and the heavy ones) in the shape of the ridges, the wet soils being thrown up into ridges with somewhat higher crowns than the drier ones.' Robert immediately mentioned the name of a field where the soil was clayey and heavy, where he had noticed the ridges as being higher in the crown or centre than those in the adjoining field, but he had supposed it had proceeded from some whim or mismanagement of the parties that had last ploughed it, rather than from any design or intention. Mr Lightfoot then went on to inform him, that although some farmers at the present day throw up their wet soils in ridges with very elevated crowns, particularly where it is intended they should continue under grass for several years, the practice was by no means so common as it formerly used to be. 'But this is not,' continued he, 'the point to which I proposed principally to draw your attention, for I wished to say a few words upon the *three* most ordinary modes of ploughing, or, it might be said, upon the three heads into which ploughing is commonly divided, which, among agriculturists, are known by the terms *casting*, *cleaving*, and *gathering*. Now, the ridges you are here engaged upon are thrown up in three-bout ones, in order that the soil might be more exposed to the action of the weather, than if they had been ploughed in wider lands or ridges. One-bout or two-bout *ribs* would have answered quite as well or better, but in that case the surface would have required to be levelled before the new seed ridges could have been formed. Now, although you have been ploughing these lands after the manner called *cleaving*—for you have cleft the original ridges, and so formed new ones of precisely the same size—you probably, by collecting two halves into a new ridge, conceived that you were ploughing in the manner known by the term *gathering;* but even admitting this were the case, you are aware that you never saw corn growing upon my farm upon such narrow ridges as you are making, except in the far spring field, or the clayey pasture. My intention was to gather two of the original ridges into one; and nothing could have been easier, for by commencing in the first furrow from the fence, and ploughing each of the old ridges into that furrow, both ways, a new ridge would then be formed of double the size of the old ones, having its crown exactly in the place of the furrow into which the soil was turned by the plough in the first bout. There being an old furrow on either side of the new ridge, care should be taken to raise a little new soil in these respective furrows—that is, at the last bout that finishes the new ridge, a portion of which, when the harrows pass along, will be forced back into the furrows between the newly formed ridges, which otherwise would be wider than necessary.' Robert at once saw the plan he ought to have adopted, and, had he taken the time to *think*, he probably would have got right without any specific instructions; for although he had gone on for a few ridges, he had felt by no means satisfied that he was doing his work properly, and when Mr Lightfoot appeared in sight, he was glad that an opportunity of being better informed upon the subject was afforded him."

In short, by diligent attention to the instructions of his master, Robert became one of the best ploughmen in the district where he lived, and, in other farm duties also, he acquired that proficiency which seldom fails to reward willing and anxious industry. "But we need not attempt to trace the career of this young ploughman, for now he may fairly be considered as such, through the various duties that devolved upon him; for before a pair of stout farm-horses were confided to his care, he had had opportunities, and he embraced them, of making himself acquainted with nearly every part of husbandry affairs, except a few such things as are scarcely ever considered the business of any persons but such as have age and experience to recommend them. We mentioned elsewhere, that during several years Mr Lightfoot had employed Robert's father as his seedsman, or person who sowed his crops; and although it is not improbable that a younger person might have managed these matters equally well and satisfactorily, it is quite certain that the charge could not have been committed to better hands. When the drill was used, in most cases Mr Lightfoot took the management of it himself; or if the waggoner and his team were not engaged in taking grain to the markets, or in hauling timber from the woods, or manure from a distance, *he* frequently undertook the management of the various drills. Among other things, Robert had learned the use of the scythe and the sickle; and, at the age of eighteen, was both an expert reaper and mower of either corn or grass. He also undertook, in the season following, the thatching of Mr Lightfoot's couple of hay-ricks, and his score or two of corn-stacks; and with so much taste and accuracy did he execute his task, that his workmanship called forth the admiration of all who beheld it."

Ultimately, Robert, when but twenty-four years of age, was recommended by his master to the situation of land-steward or bailiff on the estate of a gentleman, who had advertised for such a servant in the county newspaper. The sum of fifty pounds a-year, with board and lodging, formed the handsome remuneration which our young ploughman received in this situation. "Such of our readers as happen to be acquainted with the duties of a bailiff's situation, will, we are induced to believe, entertain no fears of Robert being able to fill it with credit to himself, and to the satisfaction of his employer. And such was soon proved to be the case—for in a very short period Robert succeeded in introducing such an improved system of husbandry upon his employer's estate, that the annual income derived therefrom was nearly doubled. But here we must bid adieu to this young man; we have seen the beginning, but not the end of his successful career, which we doubt not will continue to prosper, as it has hitherto done; and although we cannot hold out to every one who follows his example equal prospects of that success to which Robert has attained, yet if they would but embrace every opportunity of improving themselves in those duties that belong to the husbandman's calling, and educate and enlighten their minds, as far as in them lies, we should then see far more numerous instances of persons born in humble situations emerging from their lowly rank and estate, and the moral condition of that large and powerful portion of the national community—the labouring classes employed in husbandry—greatly elevated and amended."

While such was the honourable position attained by Robert, his old acquaintance Richard went on from bad to worse, acquiring idle and poaching habits, and suffering punishment accordingly. After passing a few years of his youth in the capacity of a mole-catcher, he at last "committed himself so as to render it necessary to fly from the scene of his iniquities; and falling in with a recruiting party at one of the towns he chanced to stroll to, being a well-formed youth of nineteen, he had no difficulty in enlisting into the —— regiment; when not long afterwards he accompanied a detachment of troops to a British settlement on the coast of Africa, whence he never returned."

It is a common belief that, in rural districts, no such circumstances could take place as those marking the career of Hogarth's two apprentice-boys. But both in town and country, Industry and Idleness will produce their respective and natural results, as is well shown in the history of Robert and Richard, in the "Ploughman's Guide to Service."

THE "STATISTICAL ACCOUNT"—NEW NUMBER.

THE 30th number of the New Statistical Account of Scotland* comprehends some of the Caithness and Sutherlandshire parishes. There is the same amount of useful information, mixed with a good deal of the useless, as in the other numbers, and rather more than the usual quantity of curious legendary anecdote. The reporters upon the two most northerly counties speak generally in favourable terms of the moral condition of the people, and particularly of their contentment, which, from some of the particulars given, we fear is somewhat more conspicuous than is desirable. We have also notices of distributions among the poor in some parishes to the amount of six or eight shillings to each annually—a good subject, we would hint, for any waste philanthropy which may be left over in the hands of those who declaim against the English poor-law.

The intelligent minister of Tongue, in Sutherlandshire, thus speaks of the condition and manners of his parishioners:—"The youth of both sexes are ambitious to dress well, so as to make a respectable appearance on Sabbaths and holidays. This is a laudable feeling, though it sometimes leads to extravagance, by inducing them to expend their hard-won earnings in sacrificing comfort to occasional show. When dressed in their best attire, they are allowed to be a fine-looking peasantry. At the late Duke of Sutherland's funeral, when numbers from the whole county were invited to attend, the men from Tongue attracted general notice for their superior dress and appearance. It might hence be expected that their comforts were also superior; but no. They are, indeed, not worse off than their neighbours in this respect. The general standard, however, is wretchedly low. No doubt a few of them are comfortable, but the generality seldom can rise above the commonest necessaries of life; and it is painful to think how some eke out a subsistence. The consequence is, that poverty is gradually manifesting its baneful effects upon the intellects and morals of naturally a fine and generous people. The taste for music, dancing, and public games, is much on the decline; and few or no traces are to be seen of the poetic talent and sprightly wit for which their ancestors, in common with most Highlanders, were distinguished. The imaginative powers are crushed under the continued pressure of a poverty that impels the mental energies in the low direction of what shall we eat and what shall we drink; and the habits of reflection and deep-thinking are exchanged for a sharp-sightedness in looking after their little secular interests. It is impossible that circumstances which have thus operated on their intellectual character, should not also affect their morals and religious feelings. They have done so, though not so greatly as might be expected; and it is saying much to their credit that there is so small an amount of crime, and so much security for person and property. There were never but two from this parish tried at a justiciary court, one not a native, and the other only for a breach of trust. The people are kind and peaceable, patient under adversity, submissive to laws, and respectful to authorities. They possess a good deal of religious knowledge, and much veneration for religious ordinances and usages. Laziness is no longer characteristic of the people. They are alive to the advantages of industry; in proof of which, many of them annually go south, because so little encouragement is given them at home. Poaching is unknown, and smuggling has been effectually put down through the exertions of the proprietor." How pitiable that a peasantry possessing such an admirable character for peaceful, industrious, and economical habits, should languish in a half-starved state among Highland hills and glens, when so many fields for profitable labour lie open for them in our colonial possessions!

Under Clyne, another Sutherland parish, we find the following interesting contrast between a former simpler state of the people, and the present:—"There is no district in Scotland where such an entire change has taken place in the habits, character, and pursuits of the inhabitants, as in this and the other parts of the county forming the estate of Sutherland. They were quite a rural, a moral, and a happy population, inhabiting beautifully romantic and sequestered glens in the interior—far removed from the bustle of the world. Strangers to its allurements and luxuries, they passed their lives, generation following generation, in the same localities, but without ambition to better their circumstances, or a desire to improve their possessions. All passed happily and without care, so long as the seasons proved propitious, and the produce of their stock was sufficient to pay the landlord, and to afford the means of subsistence on their simple fare; but when the winter storms lengthened into spring, and the mildew and the early frosts destroyed the hopes of the harvest, then, indeed, came the period of distress; and it is not too much to say that they suffered the very extreme of want, which often produced contagious fevers and other mortal diseases. This was submitted to, however, in silence, and with pious resignation: no tumults nor risings against the constituted authorities, who, they well knew, could not ward off the general calamity. Thus situated, helpless, and without resources, their only course was an appeal to the compassion of their natural protector, the landlord, and this was never made in vain. He required often to import meal equal in value to the rent of two or more years, and generally leaving a large balance never to be recovered. This state of things could not continue, while the rest of the world were moving ahead, and making rapid advances in improvement; consequently, the great and deeply important measure was resolved on, to remove the population to the coast-side, where they would be placed near the sea—become fishermen or artificers, and thus be able to benefit by the many and inexhaustible resources which Providence has placed within their reach. At this time, there were but few bred tradesmen in the country. When a man found it necessary to renew his rude dwelling, he called the neighbours to his assistance, and it was only the work of a few days to complete it. Every man was his own carpenter, for few implements were required, and he had little to do with them. One blacksmith served a district. The shoemaker and the tailor migrated from house to house, receiving their victuals and a small pittance of wages in return for their labour. There was scarcely a cart or a plough in the country, excepting on the larger farms. No man thought of increasing or improving his tillage or pasture lands by trenching or draining. But let any one with an impartial and unprejudiced eye examine the present condition of the inhabitants; their well-built and neatly kept cottages and enclosed gardens far exceed what many tacksmen in former days, paying from L.50 to L.100, possessed. Every individual in the family has some resource in a trade or other manual labour—all is a stirring scene of industry and positive comfort. The father and the sons cultivate the lot, if not tradesmen; while the females are engaged with household work, or preparing nets for the next herring season."

Of that now important branch of industry, the herring fishery, as carried on at Helmsdale, in Suther-

* William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh.

landshire, we find the following account, which will prove interesting to a number of our readers:—"The unsettled state of the north of Scotland before the suppression of the Rebellion of 1745, may alone be adduced as a sufficient reason for the neglect, down to that period, of the fisheries which now add so materially to the prosperity and well-being of the population of our sea-coasts; but from that date to the beginning of the present century, there was a period of fifty-four years of uninterrupted internal peace and public security, favourable for the pursuit of most branches of industry, and which could not be materially affected by a distant war such as that with America, during which the fisheries were as completely neglected as ever; and in this state, it is probable, they would have continued much longer, had not government and patriotic individuals interfered. Capital is seldom embarked in hazardous and doubtful speculations, unless there be a chance of extraordinary profits. The ultimate success of the herring-fishery was by no means certain; great profits could not, with probability, be calculated upon; and the Dutch, who, before the present century, supplied the continental markets, were, from their experience and perseverance, and more especially from their superior mode of curing (then supposed to be known to them exclusively), competitors of the most formidable description. The herring-fishery was, therefore, generally looked upon as an important national concern, in so far as it reared a hardy class of seamen, but as possessing few attractions for individual speculators. Hence, the first efforts of government to advance the fisheries were attended with partial success only; and such is the difficulty of selecting the most efficient means, at a first trial, in some legislative measures, that the principle upon which the government bounties for the encouragement of the herring-fishery were granted, has been subsequently found to be an erroneous one. Busses of not less than sixty tons burden were the description of vessels encouraged; and all such, when fitted out for sea in a particular manner, were entitled to a bounty of L.3 per ton, whether fish were caught or not. Consequently, it often followed that busses, after being passed for the deep-sea fishery, skulked along shore, or lingered in safe retired creeks, among the Orkney and other islands—only going to sea when the weather was inviting. The crews also were exempted from impressment; so that a number of lazy hands were thus obtained by the master to man the busses, at a trifling expense. This system was directly the reverse of the active and vigorous mode of fishing now prosecuted. The next measure, being a bounty of 4s. on the cran of fish, gutted, cured, and packed, in an improved manner, at stations on shore, was, however, a most important and serviceable enactment, and may be considered as giving the first well-directed impulse which the present fishery system received. The curer, at first, when the business was imperfectly understood, and when he could only command a limited number of fishermen sufficiently skilful and experienced, had to incur expenses and run risks now guarded against; and at that time the bounty often formed his only profit—while without it, it is probable that the business would have stood still or decayed. As the trade prospered under the bounty system, several individuals without capital appeared as curers. They engaged a few inefficient boats, and the premium promised to the crews was often made a postponed payment, consequent on the sale of the cured fish. If regular curing premises could not be procured, an open area with portable sheds was used. The staves, the salt, and the other curing materials, were obtained upon credit; and whenever the barrels were packed, and branded by the fishery officer, the bounty was payable and obtained, and this advance paid off the pressing current expenses. Latterly, curers of this description increased too rapidly; but the bounty, which originally worked so much good (although, as the trade increased and was understood, it fostered unsound speculation), was withdrawn in time to place the herring-fishery on a more safe foundation; because now, few persons will or can adventure in it, who are not possessed of some capital or credit.

The regulations as to the size of the barrel, the curing and packing of the fish, and the branding of the barrels, are still attended to; and, indeed, these regulations are so well calculated to secure the proper curing of the fish, that self-interest alone must compel the respectable curer to observe them strictly. Fishery officers are still retained at the different stations, whose duty it is to brand all cured herrings submitted to them, in barrels of the legal size, if of good quality, and regularly cured; and their brand, a crown, stamps them as of prime quality: and thus the fish acquire a character, without which the curer could not obtain the current market price. The barrel is, in all respects, the same as when the bounty was granted. The breadth of the staves is generally about three inches and a half, and the number in a barrel is eighteen. The barrel contains thirty-two gallons; and the number of hoops varies from sixteen and seventeen to eighteen. For the West India market, an iron hoop at each end is added. The effect of these regulations is equally beneficial to the public as to the curer; for without them, or similar checks, boatmen and inexperienced persons would pack fish, without regard to quality, mode of cure, or size and description of barrel; and a quantity of inferior and bad fish would get into market, which might ultimately create a prejudice against all British-cured herrings, and lower the price of the commodity so far, that no profit would be obtained for those regularly cured.

The Helmsdale-cured herrings are equal in quality to any in Britain, and have obtained a very high character in the market. This excellence may be attributable, in a great degree, to the very superior curing-yards, with which all the curers in Helmsdale have supplied themselves. No fish are cured here in the open air, as is frequently done, from the want of accommodation, at other stations, greatly to the prejudice of the commodity; because the rich and admired qualities of the herring are of so volatile a nature, that the slightest exposure of the fish to the sun, or even to the glare of strong daylight, before or during the process of curing, deteriorates the fish. The Helmsdale curing-yards are all perfect in their accommodation, and are cool and ample in their construction. The success attending the Helmsdale fishery has been so steady and progressive, that, although it did not commence until so late as the year 1814, when the first doubtful trial was made there, the number of barrels cured at Helmsdale, and the creeks within what is called, under the Fishery Board Control, the Helmsdale district, have increased more than ninefold, up till the year 1840—the numbers in the year 1815 being 5318, and in the year 1839 being 46,571 barrels; and of this last number, no less than 23,815 barrels were exported. This rate of increase considerably exceeds that of the success over the kingdom generally, the latter having only had an increase of sixfold since the establishment, in 1809, of the Fishery Board, which has so materially advanced the true interests of the trade; the numbers at that time, throughout the whole kingdom, being only 90,000 barrels, or not double the number now cured in the Helmsdale district alone; while, last year, the whole quantity cured in Britain was 550,000 barrels."

ELEPHANT KRAAL IN CEYLON.

One hot morning in November 18—, we set off from Kandy for the purpose of seeing that interesting sight, an elephant kraal, which was expected to take place the next day, eighteen miles distant. Our resting-place, however, was eight miles beyond; and although in this country twenty-six miles would be no great ride for a lady, yet in a tropical climate it was rather an undertaking. However, I must either have done so, or given up what I was most desirous to witness, as we could not secure any coolies, or palanquin-bearers, at that time in Kandy, they being all engaged to carry down tents, &c., to the kraal, for the general and his party. The day was fortunately rather cloudy, and although the heat was very great, we had not the direct power of the sun to contend with. We did not reach Kornagalle till six in the evening, as we rested half way for some hours during the hottest part of the day. I was dreadfully tired, so was glad to find that the kraal was not to take place the next day, but on the one after. It was a very pretty as well as an amusing ride; the whole country seemed in motion; elephant-carts and bullock-bandies, loaded with furniture and eatables, on their way to Cospeltie Orji, where several tents were pitched; and for some miles near the intended scene of action, the remains of fires, broken branches of trees, &c., gave it the appearance of having recently been a gipsy encampment.

On the morning of the kraal, our party started at daylight, some on horseback, and the rest in an elephant cart, in which we got over the ground pretty well, without the pace being unpleasant. The greater part of the gentlemen arrived at Cospeltie the day before, as it was intended to drive the elephants into the enclosure in the evening, and take them prisoners next day, which would have been done easily, as in the afternoon the herd had come very near the entrance. With respect to the kraal, it was nothing more than an enclosure about two hundred yards long, and nearly square in form, made with very strong posts, or rather small trees, stuck in the ground, and bound together. The inside was a thick jungle, with large trees in it, and the outside the same, excepting where it was cleared sufficiently to admit of the fence and a path round it. The entrance was about ten feet wide, with deep holes ready for the stakes to be driven in the moment the poor brutes were entrapped. It was covered over by a few green boughs, and is generally so contrived as to be in a track the elephants are in the habit of following. I saw several of these paths, and very curious they were; some appeared like covered archways, where the jungle was high, and were so thick, that I should think nothing but an elephant could make its way through. Kraals are only constructed in parts of the country frequented by elephants, and when it is known that there is a herd in the neighbourhood. As soon as the enclosure is finished, the elephants are surrounded by a crowd of people, who form a circle from the entrance of the kraal, and enclose them within it. This circle, of course, is very large, and varies according to circumstances; in this instance, when we arrived, the animals were enclosed in a circle of about two miles. Whenever they attempt to break through, they are driven back by the people, who shout and yell with all their might, beat the tom-toms, discharge guns, and at night fires are lighted at every ten or twelve yards' distance round the circle, and this always frightens the elephants. The natives are most anxious to have them destroyed, as they do much mischief, particularly to their paddy-fields; so that at all the kraals the natives in hundreds volunteer their services, which, of course, are gladly accepted. Government gives a premium of £3 for every elephant captured.

A very large tree at one end of the enclosure was selected for the spectators, on which, about one-third of the height up, was laid a platform, capable of holding thirty or forty people, and formed of small branches fastened together by what is called jungle rope, which is nothing more than the creepers which are twisted round every tree and bush. It is very tough and strong, as may be supposed; but I confess I should have felt safer with a piece of English rope. A very large party of us sat down to an excellent breakfast in the tents; and the yelling appearing to come nearer and nearer, we were advised to make the best of our way to the tree, which we ascended by a steep ladder, and found it very comfortable, as we were completely shaded from the sun by an awning of cocoa-nut leaves. Having gained this commanding point, our patience was tried for several hours, for though the elephants were often so near the entrance that we could see the bushes move, and sometimes their ears flapping, they always broke away again, till at last, about three o'clock, eight elephants were driven into the kraal. Then the noise of the people became deafening, and their shouts and yells of triumph drove the poor creatures on; and we had a fine view of them as they came rushing towards us, crushing the jungle in every direction. The posts were immediately put down at the entrance, and the natives stationed themselves all round the fence; and whenever the animals came near it, they were driven back by their howling and waving white sticks at them. It is said that the elephant particularly dislikes white, which is the reason the wands are flourished; but perhaps it is that white is more conspicuous than any thing else among the dark green. They were driven back several times till they had half exhausted themselves, and were then comparatively quiet in the thickest cover they could find, and all we saw was an occasional shower of earth that they tossed over their bodies with their trunks. In the course of the preceding night, the rest of the herd had broken through the watch, and got clear off, and the gentlemen were loud in their regrets that they had not then been driven in. I was very glad this had not been done, as I think the rush of the elephants into the kraal was the finest thing we saw.

Having thus so far succeeded, the next thing was to secure them; and for this purpose the tame elephants were introduced into the kraal. Six very large ones were brought in, just under our tree, and began breaking down the jungle and clearing a space round the large trees to which it was intended to tie the wild ones. It was really wonderful to see them twining their trunks round some of the smaller trees, and with two or three good shakes laying them flat. They sometimes pushed their head against a tree, so as to bring the whole force of their body upon it, and then down it came; as for the brushwood, part of which was upwards of six feet high, they really mowed it down with their trunks. In about an hour's time, the whole was, comparatively speaking, clear, and the poor herd had no longer any hiding-place, but stood all huddled close together in a little thicket, about the middle of the kraal. There was one very little thing among them, not much bigger than a large pig, and they seemed to take the greatest care of him, keeping him in the centre of them.

Each tame elephant had two men on his back, one to guide him, and the other to noose the wild ones, who did not seem to be much afraid of them, as they allowed them to come very near, and then walked rather slowly away. One of the tame ones then followed, in the most stealthy and treacherous manner possible; and when he came close enough to the wild one, he began coaxing and tickling him with his trunk, whilst the man with the noose, which is fastened round the tame one's neck, slipped off his back with it, and watched his opportunity to throw it over the hind leg of the other. He soon did this, as apparently the tame one gave the wild elephant a poke with his tusk, which made him lift his leg as if to move on; and in a moment he was a prisoner. While the man was thus employed, it was curious to see the care which the tame elephant took of him, interposing his huge head in such a manner that the wild one could not touch him; and if he should fail of securing the wild elephant, which sometimes happens, the tame one puts out his leg for the man to mount on his back, and sets off in pursuit again, which is sure to be successful in the end.

When the poor animal was noosed, he set up a dreadful yell, and tried to escape; but that was impossible, for the other tame elephants came up and headed him, whichever way he attempted to go; whilst the one to which he was fastened bent his body the way he wished to take him, and pulled him along with all his strength to the tree to which he was to be tied. When he was dragged close to it, the tame one walked round it two or three times with the rope, till he was quite secure. Another came to his other side, and thus he was wedged so closely between them that he could not make much resistance; and if he did, he was immediately thrust at with the tusks of

both of them. In this way, his legs were all firmly tied to two trees by great cable ropes.

When the tame ones left him to go in search of the others, he began struggling most furiously, and moaned and bellowed in a very melancholy manner, frequently throwing himself on the ground, and digging his teeth into the earth, while the tears were rolling down his face. Although I came on purpose to see all this, and should have been much disappointed if I had not, still I could not help feeling very sorry to see the noble animal suffering so acutely. My consolation was, that some day he would have the pleasure of doing the same to others; for it really seemed a pleasure to the tame ones. His cries brought back the rest of the herd, who looked at him through the bushes, but did not attempt a rescue, which they often do, but took to their heels whenever they saw the tame ones turn in their direction.

In this manner they were all secured, excepting the little one, as he could not do much harm, and always kept close to his mother, who was very quiet, and was therefore only tied by three legs. A young elephant is, I think, the drollest-looking creature possible. This one was supposed to be about three months old, and was not above three feet high, but it made more noise than all the rest, and trumpeted and charged in great style.

Kraals are now much less frequent in Ceylon than they used to be. Some years ago there was one in the *town* of Kandy, in which a good many elephants were taken; and a gentleman told me he was present at one in Tangalle, where 270 were enclosed, which no doubt must have been a very fine sight; but of course only a few, comparatively speaking, could have been taken, the rest must have been killed. There are now immense numbers in that part of the island, but still they are decreasing every where, and must continue to do so as the population increases, and the country is laid more open.

It is dangerous to meet a single elephant. He is almost sure to attack you, but a herd will allow you to come very close to them without attempting to touch you (unless they are irritated by being hunted or fired at); but it is a hopeless case if you meet a *rogue* elephant, as a single one is called in Ceylon. People tell you that they have been dismissed from the herd for misconduct, and that that is the reason why they are always so furious. There is a little stream very near the kraal at Cospeltie, where a few months ago the *tappal man* (as the postman is called) was killed by a rogue elephant, early in the morning. The poor fellow was told that an elephant was on the road, but he did not like to delay, and pushed on. Some people, who were not far off, just heard the animal roar, and a sort of moan followed. When it was daylight, the unfortunate man's body was found crushed in a frightful manner, but his death must have been instantaneous.

There were temporary stables near Kornagalle, where the elephants were kept till tame enough to be made useful. We went and saw them. There were ten elephants in the stalls, which had been taken at a kraal in the neighbourhood a month before. Some of them were very wild and furious-looking, one little one, as usual, making more noise than all the rest; and as he was strong enough to knock a man down, he was tied by the leg in the stall. He was afterwards given to the 78th Highlanders, who brought him home with them; and I believe he still goes as a pet with the regiment.

The situation of the elephant in his stall must be both painful and uncomfortable, and there is often great difficulty in fastening him into it; it is made just wide enough to admit him, but not sufficiently so to allow of his turning round. There is a wide stall on each side, into which two tame ones go, dragging their prisoner into the middle one, and remain beside him till he is secured to posts by each of his legs. He, therefore, can do no injury but with his trunk, and not much with that, as his neck is also fastened to a beam above. In this irksome position he is kept for forty days, without the power of turning round or lying down; the only change permitted is when he is taken down to the water to wash, which is done every day; and that cannot be much pleasure to him, as he walks between his two tame friends, who keep so close to him that he has very little power to move or look about him. Each elephant has three men to wait upon him; and a native doctor is always in attendance. After forty days he is gradually allowed more liberty, and generally in three months he is perfectly tamed, and sent down to Colombo to be educated. The most cruel part of the business is, that he is tied so tightly his legs are full of sores and quite raw. I think this might be obviated with a little more care; but as it does not injure his value, the people do not much concern themselves about his sufferings. Sometimes they feel their captivity so much, that they will neither eat nor drink, and actually die of a broken heart; and when a very young one is caught, it must be separated from its mother, as after the first day or two the poor thing can never give it any nourishment. They are fond of their young ones, and often the mother does not survive the separation, but pines away by degrees.

Two of those we saw captured were brought into Kornagalle the next evening; they were very quietly walking each between two tame ones, to which they were fastened by strong ropes, which were first thrown round the necks of the tame ones, and then round those of the wild. Their hind legs were also loosely tied together, so as to allow of their walking, and it was really surprising to see how easily they went along. Once only one of them tried to lie down, and would not move for some time; but his companions at last roused him, by poking him well with their tusks, and after that there was no difficulty.

We stopped at the kraal the next day on our way home, and saw the rest of the animals still tied to their trees. One of them was remarkably fierce; he trumpeted and lashed his trunk about, and tried to charge at us as far as the ropes would allow him. We heard afterwards that he broke his neck on his way to Kornagalle, from his violent efforts to break loose; and a few days after, the mother of the little one was found strangled in her stall, probably with her exertions to get at her young one, for she was the tamest and gentlest of them all. The little thing was brought into Kandy in a bullock-cart, and required no fewer than fifty men (not Europeans) to lift him in. He was given to the general, who was very anxious to rear him; and for a week or two he seemed to get on very well, drank twelve bottles of buffalo milk in the day, besides eating a quantity of rice and plantains; he was very far from being tame, and was obliged to be tied. However, he died after eight or ten hours' illness, without any cause that could be assigned, but probably from over-feeding and want of exercise. He did take a walk with two attendants every morning, but of course that was not the same as roaming about in his native jungle.

There is one thing about the elephants in Ceylon that puzzles every one, and that is, whether those with tusks are a distinct breed or not. Tusked elephants are very rare in Ceylon, and though they are always males, still very few males have tusks, and whole herds are frequently encountered without one tusker amongst them; and when they do happen to have one, the others seem to be very proud of him, and take the greatest care of him, always keeping him in the centre, so that it is very difficult to get a shot at him. In no other respect but his tusks can he be distinguished from other elephants, and he is to be met with of all sizes. To shoot a tusker is consequently the ambition of all sportsmen in Ceylon.

A LEGEND OF LOUGH ERNE.*

While gazing on that placid wave,
Why should the maiden's cheek be pale,
And childhood's merry look grow grave,
And age suspend the half-told tale?
Alas! those peaceful waters flow
O'er many a young and buoyant breast—
O'er manhood in its pride laid low,
And love untimely hush'd to rest!

Where ripples now that silver lake,
A busy hamlet once was seen;
Near yonder wild and tangled brake,
The village spire adorn'd the green.
Around yon thorn the infant band
Have danced away the evening hours,
Or playful snatch'd, with eager hand,
Its berry red, or snowy flowers.

While seated nigh, the hoary sage,
Indulgent watch'd their childish glee;
And who could tell that hawthorn's age?
A fairy charm preserved the tree!
Beneath its bending branches lay,
Deep, clear, and still, a crystal well,
Where monks would oft their aves say,
And pilgrims would their rosaries tell.

A lightsome flag the waters hid;
And all who came the spring to taste,
With reverence raised the stony lid,
To guard the liquid treasure placed.
For when that well St Columb bless'd,
And bade its healing streams impart
Health to the frame by pain oppress'd,
And comfort to the mourning heart—

"Protect my well from vulgar sight,"
The holy man prophetic said,
"For, one short hour exposed to light,
Its waters shall destruction spread."
When midnight's silence reign'd around,
And all was darksome, lone, and drear,
A hasty footstep press'd the ground,
And to the holy well drew near—

A fair, a young, and widow'd wife,
The parent of a drooping boy,
One draught she sought to save his life;
She raised the stone with trembling joy,
When lo! an infant's feeble cries
The night wind wafted to her ear;
"Oh, holy saint, my Gilbert dies!"
She shriek'd in agonising fear.

But soon within her fond embrace,
The babe forgot his pain the while,
And smiled upon his mother's face,
With infancy's own artless smile.
When—shrieks of horror rent the air,
Upon her anguish'd ear they fell,
And springing forth in wild despair,
She faintly scream'd, "The well! the well!"

Ah! fatal haste—remembrance late!
Beneath, around, the waters gush'd;
Vainly she strove to fly from fate,
Destruction yawn'd where'er she rush'd.
And whilst in hopeless woe she wept,
While yet the unconscious infant smiled,
A ruthless wave, which o'er them swept,
Entomb'd the parent and the child.

No longer now the waters gush'd,
You might have heard the softest breath,
All was around so calm, so hush'd—
Hush'd in the stillness of death.

Where late so active man had been,
Fate had decreed his toil should cease;
O'er hamlet, spire, and village green,
Erne's limpid waters roll'd in peace.

Since then have ages pass'd away,
The story of its grief is old,
But still, in legendary lay,
That hamlet's fearful fate is told:
Still in the wave the hawthorn dips,
Unharm'd by years, unscathed by storm;
But none will pull its crimson hips—
They're guarded by a spectral form.

And if beside the copsy brake,
Benighted peasant chance to stray,
He glances at the darksome lake,
And, shuddering, turns another way.
For there a shadowy figure stands,
Now gazing round in anguish wild,
Now wringing sore her snowy hands,
And plaintive sighs, "My child! my child!"

The softest gale that murmurs by,
The purest wave that ripples here,
That zephyr wafts the mother's sigh,
That wave contains the parent's tear.
Her mournful vigil must she keep,
Still at the midnight hour's return,
And still her fatal fondness weep,
While flow thy crystal waves, Lough Erne!

* Communicated by the author of the article "Ireland," in "Chambers's Information for the People," &c.

ON THE ACQUISITION OF KNOWLEDGE.

Do not be deceived by the sneers that you hear against knowledge, which are uttered by men who want to depress you, and keep you depressed, to the level of their own contented ignorance. Do not believe that you have no time for rational recreation. Believe me, it is the idle man who wants time for every thing. Do not believe that the acquisition of knowledge—of such knowledge as we shall offer you—is inconsistent with the success of your worldly pursuits. Depend upon it, you cannot exercise and sharpen your intellectual faculties in one branch of knowledge, without becoming better men of business in consequence. Depend also upon this, that there is a spirit of inquiry afloat, and a degree of competition, requiring the utmost mental activity and exertion. Every steamboat, every railroad, all the facilities of intercourse, are operating as bounties upon skill and intelligence. They are shortening the distance between the producer and consumer; and it is not safe for you to remain behind-hand, for, depend upon it, if you are inferior in point of skill, in point of intelligence, in point of general knowledge, to the manufacturers and producers of other districts, those increased facilities of intercourse to which I have been referring, will transfer the demand from you to others. You will labour under a false delusion if you place confidence in those sneers, if you believe that increased intelligence is incompatible with worldly success. On the contrary, I believe that society is now in the position that increased intelligence and increased knowledge are absolutely essential to success in your worldly pursuits. * * * My belief and hope is, that an increased sagacity will administer to an exalted fame—that it will make men not merely believe in the cold doctrines of natural religion, but that it will so prepare and temper the spirit and understanding, that they will be better qualified to comprehend the great scheme of human redemption. My firm belief is, that that superior sagacity which is most conversant with the course and constitution of nature—which sees the wonderful preparations that are made for the subsistence and enjoyment of the meanest animal—will be the first to believe, that that Almighty Being who has made such preparation for mere physical enjoyments, has not left in neglect and indifference the immortal soul of man. Knowing the difficulties that attend every object which we can see—observing the gradual system of progression and change, and that one course of existence is made preparatory for another, I am sanguine enough to believe that that superior sagacity will be the first to turn a deaf ear to objections and presumptions against revealed religion—will be the first to acknowledge the complete harmony of the Christian dispensation with all that reason, assisted by revelation, tells us of the course and constitution of nature. These are serious and solemn subjects, but I hope not unfitted for an occasion when we contemplate an institution of this nature. They contain, at least, an exposition of my views and hopes with respect to the progress of knowledge, which alone could induce me to take a part in an establishment of this kind.—*Address of Sir R. Peel, on the establishment of a library at Tamworth.*

ART OF PHYSICING.

Few medicines are agreeable to the taste; but one of the objects of the art of prescribing is to modify their nauseous properties as much as possible. In the domestic administration of medicines this should not be overlooked; indeed, it is more essential than in medical prescriptions, as the medicines are most frequently given in their simple form. Nauseous medicines have little taste when mixed with some substances, and when they are taken the moment they are mixed. Thus the taste of Peruvian bark and that of rhubarb, when either is mixed in milk, is completely covered if the mixture be taken directly. The nauseous taste of castor oil is covered by warm milk or by coffee; and it is also much diminished when the oil is floated upon some cold water, and a teaspoonful of brandy floated upon the oil. The disagreeable taste of senna is considerably less when the infusion is made with cold water, although it does not lessen the activity of the drug. The taste of the ordinary senna tea is covered by the addition of a few grains of cream of tartar, or by the admixture of common bohea tea. Aloes are rendered more palatable by a little of the extract of liquorice added to their solution.—*Dr Thomson.*

London: Published, with permission of the proprietors, by W. S. Orr, Paternoster Row.

Printed by Bradbury and Evans, Whitefriars.